

followed my coat, and I was bare. I wrapped myself in a blanket, covered myself as well as possible, and took such exercise as I could in my room, to prevent my limbs from stiffening. When anybody came to see me I jumped into bed, pretending that I was indisposed."

Very little money can have been lent him on his few garments. He often used to say in after-life that the only coat he possessed in that year of misery ended by fading from black to a rusty green. Thus, when he went hither and thither soliciting employment, he was very badly received. "I gathered that people thought me too shabby. I was told, too, that my handwriting was very bad; briefly, I was good for nothing. . . . Good for nothing—that was the answer to my endeavours; good for nothing — unless it were to suffer, to sob, to weep over my youth and my heart. . . . I had grown up dreaming of glory and fortune, I awoke to find myself stranded in the mire.<sup>51</sup>

\$ut it is a long lane that has' no turning. At the close of 1861, an eminent medical man, Dr. Boudet of the Academy of Medicine, who had either been connected with the Lycde St. Louis or had acted as one of the examiners when Zola had attempted to secure a bachelor's degree, gave the young man a letter of recommendation to M. Louis Hachette, the founder of the well-known

publishing business. Zola called at the firm's offices, but, for the time, he could only obtain a promise of the first suitable vacancy.

Meantime, Dr. Bondet, moved by the sight of his pitiable poverty, came to his help in an ingenious manner. On the

occasion of a new year the Parisians of the more prosperous classes invariably exchange visiting cards, and the doctor asked Zola to distribute those which he intended for his